

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 EA-07 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SSC-01 TRSE-00 EB-07 /102 W
-----181741Z 082099 /43

R 181709Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9585
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY VIENNA
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 00873

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, XT, UK
SUBJECT: SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL: NEW GENERAL SECRETARY
OFF TO SLOW START

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REF: BONN 20087 (76)

SUMMARY. THE BRITISH LABOR PARTY REPORTS THAT THE NEW
SI GENERAL SECRETARY, BERNT CARLSSON, HAS NOT YET TAKEN
HOLD IN HIS NEW JOB. HE HAS NOT BEEN REPLACED AS INTER-
NATIONAL SECRETARY OF THE SWEDISH SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY
AND, FOR THE TIME BEING, IS DIVIDING HIS TIME BETWEEN THE

TWO POSTS. HE IS EXPECTED TO MOVE TO LONDON IN MARCH. AS A RESULT, THE NEXT SI BUREAU MEETING IS LIKELY TO BE POSTPONED. CARLSSON INHERITS AN ORGANIZATION WHICH IS RUN DOWN, HAS SEVERAL VACANT POSITIONS AND IS IN FINANCIAL DIFFICULTY. TO HELP OVERCOME THE MANAGEMENT PROBLEMS, A SECOND ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL POSITION HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED, WITH THE NEW SLOT EXPECTED TO GO TO A FRENCH SOCIALIST. FORMER ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY BALCOMB (BRITISH) HAS RETURNED TO THE SI, APPARENTLY ON A PERMANENT BASIS, TO AID WITH THE TRANSITION. THE LABOR PARTY IS ALSO CONCERNED THAT BRANDT'S RETENTION OF HIS POST AS SPD CHAIRMAN WILL GIVE RISE TO PROBLEMS AS HE CARRIES OUT HIS SI FUNCTIONS. WHILE WE EXPECT THE NEW SI TEAM TO BE AN IMPROVEMENT, THE SI'S TRADITIONAL PROBLEMS AND DIVERGENCES ARE UNLIKELY TO BE OVERCOME. END SUMMARY

1. ACCORDING TO LABOR PARTY INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY, JENNY LITTLE, THE NEW SI GENERAL SECRETARY, BERNT CARLSSON, IS OFF TO A VERY SLOW START, AS HE HAS NOT YET BEEN REPLACED AS INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY OF THE SWEDISH SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY. CURRENTLY HE COMMUTES BETWEEN STOCKHOLM AND LONDON, DIVIDING HIS TIME BETWEEN THE TWO JOBS. (OUR ATTEMPTS TO MAKE A COURTESY CALL ON CARLSSON CONFIRM THAT HE IS RARELY IN LONDON.) THIS SITUATION IS EXPECTED TO CONTINUE UNTIL MARCH WHEN CARLSSON PLANS TO MOVE TO LONDON. BECAUSE OF THIS DELAY, THE LABOR PARTY EXPECTS THAT THE MARCH MEETING OF THE SI BUREAU WILL BE POSTPONED.

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2. CARLSSON'S PREDECESSOR, JANITSCHK, WAS A POOR ADMINISTRATOR AND THE SI'S TRADITIONALLY WEAK FINANCIAL POSITION, THOUGH SOMEWHAT IMPROVED OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS, IS WELL KNOWN. THESE PROBLEMS HAVE BEEN MAGNIFIED BY THE DEPARTURE OF SEVERAL KEY SI EMPLOYEES OVER THE PAST FEW MONTHS. HOLDING THE FORT DURING THE DELAYED TRANSITION IS FORMER ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY RODNEY

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 LONDON 00873

BALCOMB (RESIGNED IN EARLY 1976). A BRITON WHO AGREED TO
RESUME HIS OLD POST, APPARENTLY ON A PERMANENT BASIS. A
SECOND ASSISTANT'S POSITION HAS BEEN AUTHORIZED. IT IS
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EXPECTED TO GO TO A MEMBER OF THE FRENCH SOCIALIST PARTY,
BUT THUS FAR NO ONE HAS BEEN SELECTED TO FILL THE NEW
SLOT.

3. WHILE THE LABOR PARTY EXPECTS SPD CHAIRMAN WILLY
BRANDT TO BE A MORE EFFECTIVE SI CHAIRMAN THAN AUSTRIAN
BRUNO PITTERMANN, ITS LEADERS ARE CONCERNED THAT HIS DUAL
ROLE WILL GIVE RISE TO PROBLEMS. FOR EXAMPLE, LITTLE
CITED BRANDT'S VISIT TO SPAIN IN CONNECTION WITH THE

RECENT PSOE CONFERENCE. WHILE THERE, BRANDT MET WITH JUAN CARLOS AND PREMIER SUAREZ WEARING HIS SPD HAT. THIS REPORTEDLY CAUSED SOME DISQUIET AMONG SEVERAL MEMBER PARTIES, AS THE PSOE IS STILL NOT A LEGAL PARTY IN SPAIN AND PUBLICLY, PARTICULARLY IN SPAIN, THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN BRANDT AS THE SI LEADER AND BRANDT AS THE SPD LEADER IS DIFFICULT TO DRAW.

4. COMMENT IT IS UNFORTUNATE THAT CARLSSON HAS BEEN UNABLE TO MOVE INTO THE SI HEADQUARTERS PROMPTLY AT THE BEGINNING OF HIS TERM. WHILE WE TEND TO AGREE WITH BONN'S ASSESSMENT (REFTEL) THAT THE BRANDT/CARLSSON TEAM IS LIKELY TO PROVIDE THE SI WITH MORE EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP, IT WOULD BE A MISTAKE TO ASSUME THAT THEY CAN RECAST THIS DIVIDED AND TROUBLED ORGANIZATION. ALTHOUGH BRANDT'S PERSONAL PRESTIGE SHOULD ENHANCE THE SI'S IMAGE, HIS DUAL SPD/SI ROLE COULD BECOME AN ADDITIONAL DIVISIVE FACTOR AMONG THE ALREADY DISPARATE MEMBER PARTIES.

5. FOR STOCKHOLM: WE WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING AVAILABLE BIOGRAPHIC DATA ON CARLSSON.

ARMSTRONG

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